

# **ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

## **DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES**

### **NEWS RELEASE**



*Cora J. Campbell, Commissioner*  
*Jeff Regnart, Director*



Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Travis Elison, Acting Area Management Biologist

Kuskokwim Area Office  
P.O. Box 1467  
Bethel, AK 99559  
Phone: (907) 543-2433  
Fax: (907) 543-2021  
Toll free: (855) 933-2433

U.S. Department of Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Federal Subsistence Board  
Geoffrey L. Haskett, Regional Director  
Peter J. Probasco, Asst.  
Regional Director Subsistence  
Gene Peltola, Kuskokwim Area Inseason Manager  
Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 346  
Bethel, AK 99559  
Phone: (907) 543-3151  
Fax (907) 543-4413

Date Issued: June 29, 2012

### **2012 Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery News Release 11**

### **Kuskokwim River Subsistence Salmon Fishing Restrictions**

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at Bethel for subsistence salmon fishermen in the Kuskokwim River Drainage.

#### **Lower Section of Subdistrict 1-B: Section 1**

Currently subsistence salmon fishing is closed and fishing for non-salmon species is restricted to the use of gillnets with 4-inch or less mesh not exceeding 60-feet in length until 11:59 p.m., Friday, June 29, 2012. Effective 12:00 a.m., Saturday, June 30, 2012 subsistence salmon fishing will open to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh not exceeding 50-fathoms in length. This is to allow opportunity to harvest chum and sockeye salmon while conserving Chinook salmon. Chinook salmon fishing with hook and line gear remains closed.

This area is defined as, that portion of the Kuskokwim River and its tributaries upstream from a line from Apokak Slough to the southernmost tip of Eek Island to Popokamiut to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located between the Kialik and Johnson Rivers. This area is also known as the Lower Section of commercial fishing Subdistrict 1-B. Excluded waters are non-salmon spawning tributaries: those portions of Kinak, Kialik, and Tagayarak rivers more than 100 yards upstream from the mouth of these rivers, are open with any mesh size gillnet and are not affected by these closures.

## **Upper Section of Subdistrict 1-B to Tuluksak: Section 2**

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh not exceeding 50-fathoms in length until 11:59 p.m., Saturday, June 30, 2012. This is to allow opportunity to harvest chum and sockeye salmon while conserving Chinook salmon. Subsistence salmon fishing will close for two days effective 12:00 a.m., Sunday, July 1, 2012 until 11:59 p.m., Monday, July 2, 2012. During this two-day closure fishing for non-salmon species will be restricted to the use of gillnets with 4-inch or less mesh not exceeding 60-feet in length. Effective 12:00 a.m., Tuesday, July 3, 2012 subsistence salmon fishing will open to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh. Chinook salmon fishing with hook and line gear remains closed.

This area is defined as that portion of the Kuskokwim River and its tributaries upstream from a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located between the Kialik and Johnson Rivers to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately half a mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth. This section includes the slough (locally known as Utak Slough) on the northwest side of the Kuskokwim River adjacent to the Tuluksak River mouth. Subsistence salmon fishing remains closed on the mainstem Kuskokwim River between ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately one half a mile above the mouth of the Tuluksak River to approximately one mile below the mouth of the Tuluksak River. Kuskokuak Slough remains closed from ADF&G regulatory markers located at the mouth of Kwethluk River downstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located at the mouth of Kuskokuak Slough.

## **Tuluksak to Chuathbaluk: Section 3**

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh not exceeding 50-fathoms in length until 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, July 4, 2012. This is to allow opportunity to harvest chum and sockeye salmon while conserving Chinook salmon. Subsistence salmon fishing will close for two day effective 12:00 a.m., Thursday, July 5, 2012 until 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 6, 2012. During this two-day closure fishing for non-salmon species will be restricted to the use of gillnets with 4-inch or less mesh not exceeding 60-feet in length. Effective 12:00 a.m., Saturday, July 7, 2012 subsistence salmon fishing will open to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh. Chinook salmon fishing with hook and line gear remains closed. Additionally, a fish wheel used to take fish must be equipped with a livebox that contains no less than 45 cubic feet of water volume while in operation. The livebox must be checked at least once every six hours while in operation and all Chinook salmon must be returned to the water alive. Chinook salmon fishing with hook and line gear remains closed.

This area is defined as that portion of the Kuskokwim River and its tributaries upstream from a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately half a mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located at the downstream edge of Chuathbaluk. This section does NOT include the slough (locally known as Utak Slough) on the northwest side of the Kuskokwim River adjacent to the Tuluksak River mouth. Excluded waters are non-salmon spawning tributaries: the Whitefish Lake drainage near Aniak and those portions of Discovery, Birch, and Swift creeks more than 100 yards upstream from the mouth of these rivers, are open with any mesh size gillnet and are not affected by these closures.

## **Run Assessment**

The current Bethel Test Fishery (BTF) Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) indicates that there are not enough Chinook salmon to meet the 2012 Chinook salmon Management Objective (Management Objective) that was agreed upon by the Department, the Federal Inseason Manager, and was supported by the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group.

The assessment of chum and sockeye salmon at the BTF indicates that there is a harvestable surplus of these species.

Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office and through local radio stations. News releases will be faxed to area villages and local fish processing companies.

### **For additional information concerning this news release:**

**ADF&G:** Travis Elison in Bethel 907-543-2433

**USFWS:** Gene Peltola in Bethel 907-543-3151

-end-